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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/877,341	06/08/2001	Gerald B. Eaton	86821	1029

7590

01/09/2003

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EXAMINER

MCAVOY, ELLEN M

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1764

DATE MAILED: 01/09/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/877,341

Applicant(s)

EATON ET AL.

Examiner

Ellen M McAvoy

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2-5.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Storm (6,178,980 B1) in combination with Eaton et al, (6,015,779) or (5,869,570).

Storm discloses a method of reducing the viscosity of a heavy oil flowing through a pipe which comprises mixing heavy oil, water in an amount of 1-10% by volume, and an effective amount of a C₁ to C₁₀ alcohol such as 1-propanol, 1-butanol, 1-pentanol, 1-hexanol, 1-heptanol, or mixtures thereof. The concentration of alcohol should be less than 10% by weight of the mixture. See column 3, lines 5-30. The examiner is of the position that the alcohol component of Storm meets the claim limitation of an alfol alcohol of applicants' invention. The drag reducing agent slurry of the claims comprises a polyalphaolefin and at least one alfol alcohol. However, the Eaton et al ["Eaton"] references disclose polyalphaolefins as drag reducing agents and Storm teaches that the mixture may further include a polymeric drag reducing agent in a concentration from about 1 to about 10,000 ppm. See column 8, lines 64-67.

The Eaton references relate to methods for improving flow of hydrocarbons through conduits, particularly pipelines, and disclose compositions of polyalphaolefins that function as drag reducing agents and disclose a process for the preparation of the polyalphaolefins. The process includes contacting alpha-olefin monomers with a catalyst system which includes a

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transition metal catalyst such as titanium trichloride and a co-catalyst such as alkylaluminumoxane which may be used in combination with a dialkylaluminum halide or a halohydrocarbon. The alpha-olefin monomers include homopolymers, copolymers and terpolymers which can be present in the reactant mixture in different amounts, alone or in combination, and include copolymers of 1-hexene and 1-dodecene and copolymers of 1-octene and 1-tetradecene. See column 2, line 60 to column 3, line 7 of Eaton '779. The polyalphaolefins of Eaton may include noncrystalline, ultra-high molecular weight polymers having an inherent viscosity of at least about 10 deciliters per gram. See column 3, lines 13-35 of Eaton '779. The examiner is of the position that the polyalphaolefin drag reducing agents taught in the Eaton references meet the claim limitations for the polyalphaolefin components and meet the claim limitations for forming the polyalphaolefin components. Thus, having the prior art references before the inventors at the time the invention was made it would have been obvious to the skilled artisan to have combined a known polymeric drag reducing agent to the composition of Storm. The examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, the motivation relied on by the examiner is the teaching in column 8 of Storm allowing for the addition of a polymeric drag reducing agent in a concentration of from about 1 to 10,000 ppm.

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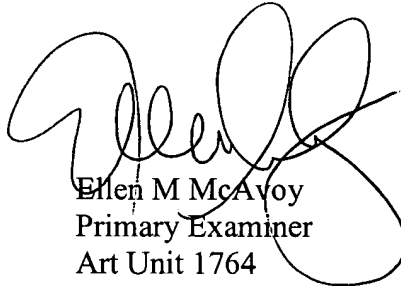
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ellen M McAvoy whose telephone number is (703) 308-2510.

The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (7:30-5:00) with alt. Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenn Caldarola can be reached on (703) 308-6824. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.



Ellen M McAvoy
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1764

EMcAvoy
January 7, 2003